

Bathymetric Inversion from Shore-Based Video Imagery

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Abstract

Models that predict nearshore behavior require as input boundary conditions the bottom profile. Traditionally, beach profiles are measured with differential GPS receivers mounted on amphibious vehicles or small boats. Logistical difficulties in obtaining frequent beach profiles over large nearshore areas have limited their acquisition to a few sites or intensive study periods. In this work, the ability of remote imaging techniques to measure the beach profile using land-based video cameras is evaluated. Such techniques have been developed for video systems on airplanes (Dugan *et al.*, 2001 a, 2001 b), from which the methodology used in this project is based. The airborne techniques will be adapted for use with a fixed, highly oblique video camera mounted on a 20 *m* high tower erected on the dune at the USACE Field Research Facility (FRF) in the Outer Banks, North Carolina. Water depths are determined by estimating linear wave theory dispersion curves from image intensity energy surfaces in wavenumber-frequency space. Approximately 12 minute video time series over successive, overlapping square sections of the nearshore (100 *m* on a side) are interrogated from 6 *m* depths to near the shoreline. Results spanning November 2006 to October 2007 (12 individual surveys) are compared with *in situ* survey measurements obtained with traditional methods on the same day. Water depths estimated from the video inversion methods were generally within 0.75 *m* of the *in situ* surveys all the way to 6 *m* water depths about 500 *m* from shore. Larger discrepancies occurred in regions influenced by a large pier in the center of the domain. RMS errors as a function of cross-shore and alongshore position were also computed. RMS errors were typically 0.5-0.75 *m* within 250 *m* of the shoreline, and often extending offshore to 500 *m*. Errors as a function of alongshore position were also less than 0.75 *m* except in the region blocked by the pier.

The waves which dash upon the shore are, one by one, broken, but the ocean conquers nevertheless. It overwhelms the Armada, it wears out the rock.
-Lord Byron (1821)

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Table of Contents

	Page
Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Figures.....	vii
Chapters:	
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Motivation for Study.....	1
1.2 Background	1
2. Methodology.....	9
2.1 Research Location.....	9
2.2 Inversion Methods.....	13
3. Results & Analysis.....	19
3.1 Survey Comparison.....	20
3.2 Statistical Analysis.....	24
4. Discussion.....	27
4.1 Influence of the pier.....	27
4.2 Wave conditions.....	28
4.3 Currents.....	29
4.4 Wave nonlinearities.....	29
4.5 Spatial and temporal variations.....	30
5. Conclusions.....	31

References.....	33
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List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Systematic showing the process of wave transformation as waves propagate into the shallow water of the surf zone.

Figure 1.2: Example rod survey, a traditional method for obtaining water depths.

Figure 1.3: Coastal Research Amphibious Buggy (CRAB) – one of the more traditional methods for obtaining in situ bathymetric data.

Figure 1.4: A modern Light Detection And Ranging (Lidar) system used to obtain water depths through the used of aerial laser pulses.

Figure 1.5: Airborne Remote Optical Spotlight System (AROSS) used in the aerial imaging technique of Dugan *et al*, 2001 (a, b). This plane, with a camera mounted on the lower nose in the lower right corner of the image, was used to record coastal video images to later be analyzed for estimated water depths.

Figure 2.1: Image of the tower with video camera at the top used to record coastal video images.

Figure 2.2: The research site location for this study in Duck, North Carolina, USA (Panel a) at the USACE Field Research Facility (panel b).

Figure 2.3: Plan view of the area encompassed by the camera. The axes are in the FRF coordinate system.

Figure 2.4: Panel (a) displays a sample snapshot image recorded from the video system. This image is time-averaged and placed in an ortho-normalized view shown in panel (b).

Figure 2.5: Plot of frequencies associated with the wave field at a selected location on the video image.

Figure 2.6: Two wave number spectra selected from frequencies in Figure 2.5. Wavenumbers k_x, k_y associated with the maximum energy determine $|\mathbf{k}|$.

Figure 2.7: Plot of wave numbers used with frequency to estimate a water depth based on the best-fit curve of the linear dispersion relation to the data.

Figure 2.8: This figure shows an example region of $100 \times 100 \text{ m}$ used to create a cross-shore profile at $y = 410 \text{ m}$ by subsequently moving the region toward the shore.

Figure 3.1: Snapshot image from 06 Dec 2006 and ortho-normalized view.

Figure 3.2: 2D map created by interpolating between transect lines measured using *in situ* FRF survey data. These data are used to compare with estimated results to determine the accuracy of the inversion technique.

Figure 3.3: Estimated water depths obtained using the inversion technique. The black lines labeled A-D are associated with the individual profile lines shown in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: These Panels shows individual selected transect lines chosen to display how the inversion technique performs at specific locations. Each panel corresponds to lines in Figure 3.3. The black line represents the *in situ* data surveyed by the FRF staff and the estimated bathymetries are represented by the red dots. Mean sea level is also shown by the straight, dashed line.

Figure 3.5: Difference map between the estimated results and the *in situ* survey data. Positive values correspond to underestimates and negative numbers represent overestimated water depths using the inversion technique.

Figure 3.6: RMS errors as a function of cross-shore and alongshore positions for the sampled day 7 Dec 2006.

Figure 3.7: Contoured RMS errors as a function of the cross-shore position for each of the 12 samples days spanning the 1 year period from November 2006 – October 2007 .

Figure 3.8: Contoured RMS errors as a function of the alongshore position for each of the 12 samples days spanning the 1 year period from November 2006 – October 2007

Figure 4.1: Worse case example where the influence of the pier inhibits the ability to produce and estimated water depth.

Figure 4.2: Example favorable scenario where we are able to accurately estimate water depths through the pier.